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which he presents in their favor. We may examine the so-called facts and reject all for which there is not sufficient evidence. We may decide, each for himself, what these facts shall teach him. This is our privilege; nay rather it is our duty.

**The Department of the Old Testament in the Seminary.**—The wide scope of the Department of the Old Testament is not generally considered. What must be included in it is really appreciated by very few. In no other field of theological study has there, within half a century, been so great an advance, so marked a “widening.” What, in our day, is the Old Testament professor supposed to teach? 1) *The Hebrew Language*; nor is the divinity student any longer satisfied with the meagre knowledge of this language, thought sufficient twenty-five years ago. Instead of merely memorizing the paradigms, and becoming slightly acquainted with a few of the most common linguistic principles, the student must master the multitude of facts which make up the language, and understand the principles which regulate these facts. He must know the meaning of a thousand Hebrew words, instead of a hundred. He must read chapters, where formerly verses were read, and entire books, where chapters were read. The student is expected to leave the Seminary, able to read with ease his Hebrew Bible; this expectation, however, is realized only in the case of a small proportion. Although the ideal is, in our day, so much higher than heretofore, for various reasons which need not here be specified, the actual state of affairs is far from an encouraging one. “Oh! for more time,” is the cry that ascends daily and hourly from the heart of the professor of the Old Testament.

2) *The Cognate Languages*; among which at least Aramaic, Syriac, Assyrian and Arabic are to be reckoned. Instruction in these languages must be given; because they furnish much material which is of use in a proper understanding of Hebrew grammar; because from these, often, information must be gained for the elucidation of Hebrew words of doubtful meaning; because in one of these languages, a portion of the Old Testament is written, and in another, there are locked up historical annals, contemporaneous with the Biblical records themselves. For these, and for other reasons, the cognates are studied. It is not wise, of course, for all students to endeavor to obtain a knowledge of these languages. This, indeed, is not even possible. But there are a few, and the number increases each year, who desire this instruction, and for whom it is most profitable.

3) *History*; and here we must include (a) the geography of Palestine and other Bible-lands, an acquaintance with which is demanded of Bible students; (b) the archæology of the Old Testament,—the manners and customs, laws and institutions of the chosen people and of other nations mentioned in Scripture; (c) Sacred History proper, from the earliest times to the coming of the Messiah; and (d) the history of the nations with whom Israel came into contact; e. g., the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Romans, and others.

By far too little attention is given to this subject. The ignorance, which exists among those who ought to be familiar with these matters, is, indeed, remarkable. Of all the sub-departments connected with the Old Testament, this one is, perhaps, most neglected. That knowledge which is most essential, after a knowledge of the original languages, for any kind of Bible work, whether literary or exegetical, is in most cases lacking. Anything like an intimate acquaintance with the facts of Old Testament history, to say nothing of the philosophy of Old Testament history, is a rare acquisition. This is so, in large part, because no

attention is paid the subject in the Seminary. And although the professor of the Old Testament is appointed to teach the Old Testament, of which a large portion is history, and the remainder unintelligible except in its historical connection, this service is not performed; partly, because with the many other duties devolving upon the instructor *he* cannot find time, and partly because as the work of the Seminary is proportioned, there seems to be no time for the student to devote to it. That any other than an Old Testament specialist should be entrusted with this historical work, is, as Professor Curtiss has already stated, no longer possible.

4) *Literature*; which includes (a) Canonics, or the study of the Canon of Scripture; (b) Textual Criticism, or the determination of the true text; (c) Literary Criticism, or the study of separate Books and sections, with a view to ascertaining their authorship, date, integrity, style, etc. This work is, at present, receiving a large share of the attention of students and teachers; and this is rightly so. We can scarcely regard any part of the work of the Biblical scholar, as more important. The so-called "results" of destructive criticism are certainly to be rejected; but this does not imply that the methods and principles of Literary or "Higher" Criticism are to be ignored. The student, who endeavors to interpret the twenty-third psalm, without employing all the methods, and without working in accordance with all the principles of Higher Criticism, in order thereby to determine (1) whether David was really the author; (2) under what circumstances the psalm was written; (3) the literary style and character of the psalm,—that man fails utterly in his attempt at interpretation. The same may be said of him who would interpret a prophet, or an historian, without this aid. Let instruction in the Old Testament department include, however, not merely a history of critics, and of criticism; let it rather teach the methods and principles of criticism, after a thorough examination of the facts; i. e., the facts that *are* facts.

5) *Interpretation*; and here a distinction must be made between (a) Hermeneutics, the principles of Interpretation; (b) Exegetics, the rules of Interpretation, and (c) Exegesis, the work of Interpretation. This is the main work of the Old Testament professor. All other work is preliminary and preparatory. It is here that the largest share of time is spent,—and spent, too frequently, without satisfactory results. We would point out two mistakes made by a large proportion of Old Testament instructors.

(1) The student is introduced to interpretation, without any real knowledge of the literary and historical character of the book under consideration, and without any adequate knowledge of the language in which the book is written. It is absurd for a man who has studied Hebrew only three or four months, who has, as yet, learned the particular meaning of but few words, and is acquainted with almost none of the niceties of syntax, to be thrust into advanced exegetical work. Little or no work, of a strictly exegetical character, ought to be undertaken in the Junior year, as long as it shall be necessary for the student to begin Hebrew after entering the Seminary; and a fair share of the work in both Middle and Senior years should be exclusively linguistic.

(2) The professor dictates his exegetical notes. Precious time is thus employed in giving that which can be found in as good form, perhaps, in an ordinary commentary. The "notes" thus received by the student are laid carefully aside to be preserved. It ought to be known that here, as elsewhere, the student needs to be taught, not the thing itself, but how he himself may obtain it. The preparation, for himself, of the exegesis of one verse, with the criticism of it by the

instructor, will benefit the student more than the hearing from the lips of his instructor the interpretation of ten verses. Let the student, therefore, be required to interpret for himself. If he have not a sufficient knowledge of the language, to do this, he is not yet fitted to listen to the learned interpretations of his instructor. It may be inquired whether sufficient attention is paid to that most important of Old Testament topics, *prophecy*. This subject, if we mistake not, though deserving and, indeed, demanding the most careful attention, is, for the most part, neglected. Old Testament interpretation—what is there *not* included here? how dark and mysterious, yet how essential and profitable are the many topics, classified under this head.

6) *Old Testament Theology*. The claim of this as a department of exegetical work is not yet everywhere accepted. We believe, however, that before long Old Testament instruction will be regarded as incomplete without this its crowning department. Surely, without it, all exegetical work is incomplete.

And now, in view of this, two facts establish themselves:

*First*, No *one* man can be expected to do all this work. No *one* man *can* do it, and do it well. The Old Testament department must be doubly manned. Already this has been done in many seminaries; let all seminaries, that would rank high, see to it that there are two professors in the department of Hebrew and the Old Testament.

*Secondly*, No student, entering the seminary with a knowledge of Hebrew yet to be gained, can, in the time allotted this department, do work in it that may in any sense be called satisfactory. What then? Let him gain a working knowledge of Hebrew before entrance; and let those who have the arrangement of the curriculum of study recognize the fact that the Old Testament department, is, in reality, two departments, the one linguistic, the other, exegetical; and let them show their recognition of this fact by allowing it a proper amount of time.

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## ➤BOOK NOTICES.◀

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### SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST.\*

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Just for the same reason that we should refer any person desirous of studying the Christian religion at original sources, to the inspired literature of this religion, any one wishing to understand, in any good degree, the historical faiths of paganism, must study them in their sacred books. Until recently, this has been a privilege possible to but very few persons. Not many, in the nature of things, can be so circumstanced as to have either time or opportunity, had they the peculiar linguistic gifts, enabling them to so learn the various languages in which these books were originally written as to master their literature even sufficiently to gain correct general ideas of the kind of religion they teach, or to put them in relations of comparison and contrast with our own inspired Scriptures. Hitherto, at least

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\* SACRED BOOKS OF THE EAST. Translated by various Oriental scholars, and edited by F. Max Mueller. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.